

Annual General Meeting 2022

20 November 2022

Holy Trinity Church, Melrose and
live-streamed to the online congregation

Draft Minutes

1. Welcome and opening prayer

The Rector welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the AGM in church and online, and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies from members of the congregation were noted, including Caroline Green and Jane Stevenson.

It was noted that the number of people present in the congregation meant the AGM was quorate.

3. Minutes of 2021 AGM, 30 January 2022

The minutes of the previous AGM were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Margaret Jackson and Seconded by Ian Skinner.

4. Elections

4.1 People's Warden

The Rector reported that John Williams had kindly agreed to stand for a further year's term as People's Warden.

4.2 Lay Representative

The Rector reported that Mervyn Anthony will continue in his role as Lay Representative and Borders Area Council Member. The Alternate Lay Representative role is covered by Malcolm McVittie.

5. Draft Annual Report and Accounts

The Treasurer introduced his report by confirming that the draft annual report and accounts had been circulated by the Secretary in advance of the meeting.

Overall congregational giving had begun to increase following the end of lockdown. The pattern of giving had changed however, with more given online via, for example, Just Giving, but with giving via the personal envelope system reduced to pew-side envelopes only.

A reduction in investment income had, to some degree, been offset by a recovery and renewal grant from the Diocese. Further income from the Smarties collection, the Music Festival and Rectory rental had been welcome.

On the expenditure side, the Treasurer reported that maintenance had resumed post-covid, particularly urgent actions identified in the latest Quinquennial report. Charitable giving had also been increased during the year. Overall, the difference between Receipts and Payments had led to an annual deficit of £4,842.

It was noted that the Vestry had discussed and agreed a new reserves policy, which would hold six months' running costs as a contingency fund (approx. £37,000).

In conclusion, the Treasurer thanked Alexander Storie, Alasdair Johnston, Elizabeth Stockdill and John Barley for their support in preparing the annual accounts. The Rector thanked the Treasurer for the not inconsiderable amount of work required to prepare the annual accounts.

As there were no questions, the Annual Report and Accounts were Proposed by Pamela Gordon and Seconded by Malcolm McVittie.

6. Draft annual budget 2022-23

The draft budget for the coming year forecasts a deficit of nearly £15,000. The Treasurer explained that this involved an element of guesswork, especially on energy costs, but did include considerable expenditure on the works and repairs deemed essential and desirable within the Quinquennial report. Additionally, costs also include payment for grass-cutting within the churchyard, and a modest increase to the musical directors' fee, noted as the first increase in a number of years.

There were no questions on the draft budget and it was therefore Proposed by Sara Duncan and Seconded by John Williams.

7. Appointment of Independent Examiner of Church Accounts

Alexander Storie had agreed to stand again and was approved as the Independent Examiner of the Church Accounts.

8. Rector's Report

The Rector opened his report by expressing his delight in having a ministry team to share in the preaching and celebration and thanked Liz Williams, Ed Creaney and Claire Nicholson. Additionally, he thanked Chris Achenbach and the members of the choir who also added to the quality of worship at Holy Trinity.

The Rector asked the congregation to think about being Christians in the post-covid world and that, even though we are not a big congregation and we need more children and young people, we should not berate ourselves about this, ie not let 'best' be the enemy of 'good'. He suggested that we think of people 15 years either side of our age and invite them to come to Holy Trinity. We have a group of people who love and pray for us and our attitude should be that we have faith in ourselves and God, which are the things we need to grow the church.

The idea of taking just 'one step further' to invite new members into the church would be debated further by the Vestry and shared with the congregation.

On a personal note, the Rector expressed his gratitude to the Vestry and congregation for enabling his family's move to Darnick, which had improved their family and home life.

9. Other committee reports

The sub-committee and other reports made available before the meeting were noted. The Rector thanked those who have taken the time to prepare them.

10. Any other business

Carey Coombs asked for more information on regarding the size and make up of the congregation post-covid. The Rector explained that some of the online congregation had reduced as people were able to go back to their churches but that we have approximately 250 online worshippers who are local but also from England, the USA, Oman, Dubai and Australia. These changes have enabled us to develop and install new equipment to make the online services better. An anonymous donor has kindly enabled the purchase some of this new equipment.

Carl Hodgson asked that thanks be noted to Gavin Blackledge for managing the cameras and equipment during the online services. The Rector added that he was grateful for the help Gavin gives him and that he now attends church in his own right rather than as son of the Rector.

11. Closing prayer

The meeting closed with a prayer and The Grace.

(nb full copies of the papers were made available to the congregation in advance of the AGM.)